SINGING IS GOOD FOR YOU!

It's official: singing is good for you. And singing in a group is even better!

Barbershop style men's choir, the Sydney Harmony Chorus, are in no doubt they're not just having fun... the latest medical evidence proves they're also keeping fit!

Boost Your Brain doctor **Helena Popovic** says the overwhelming weight of international research links singing with lower heart rate, decreased blood pressure and reduced stress. There's also increased lung capacity, better posture, lower incidence of asthma – *plus* the emotional benefits of singing as part of a group.

"It goes even further," says the vivacious medico whose motto is '*follow your heart and you'll live a life you love*'.

"Playing music is associated with lower incidences of dementia and Altzheimers... it's another testament to the power of 'neuroplasticity.

"Beyond the aerobic benefits that promote heart health and give you a *longer* life, singing gives you a *better* life because it boosts your brain," adds Dr Popovic. " The endorphins and other neurochemicals that are stimulated when you take up singing – no matter how late in life – open new pathways in the brain."

Sydney Harmony Chorus members with host Dr Andrew Rochford on Channel 9's "What's Good for You"

Well-known Media lifestyle doctor and cardiologist, **Dr Ross Walker** agrees.

"If absence makes the heart grow fonder... music makes the heart grow stronger!"

Long-time member of the cheery all-male choir and Northern Beaches GP, Dr Michael Beilby, is in no doubt they're right.

"It's great facial exercise too; I owe my boyish good looks entirely to singing," he says - with a grin!

Barbershop music is a type of *a cappella* (unaccompanied) vocal music originally sung in quartets in the USA. Tenor, baritone and bass singers harmonise around a 'lead' singer.

Dynamic Musical Director Vicki Dwyer rehearses with the men of the Sydney Harmony Chorus

The choir perform regularly and compete in Eisteddfods and national, even international events. Late last year they sang up a storm in Hawaii and this September is the *big one*: the AAMBS Convention in Hobart. The Australian Association of Men's Barbershop Singers – with around 1000 members – holds its biennial convention including international guests, *healthy* competition and a stunning finale featuring the biggest sing in the southern hemisphere. That's *hearty*!

Sydney Harmony welcomes new members.
Visit *www.sydneyharmony.com.au*
or email secretary@sydneyharmony.com.au